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VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE

April 24, 2006

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Dear Chris:

The Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police requests your support in the elimination of 10-codes for emergency operations. The Secretary of Homeland Security had pushed for this initiative during the nationwide process of insuring that the responsible governmental agencies trained all affected personnel in the National Incident Management System (NIMS). He recently has reversed his position on the abolishment of the 10-codes for emergency operations.

Emergency operations cannot be safely conducted unless all participating parties communicate with a common language. Unfortunately, the 10-codes vary in their meanings and can cause unnecessary confusion when many different agencies are responding to a disaster situation. The events involving Hurricane Katrina on the Gulf Coast indicate the need for a common communication language when many different agencies are rapidly deployed into a non-traditional response area.

It is critical that we minimize the use of different 10-codes and agree upon using a standard set of the fewest codes to ensure we all understand each other in mutual aid situations. This is a main initiative for NIMS that will increase interoperable communications significantly without requiring any new technology.

The Initiative Action team that is working on this project includes representation from law enforcement, fire and rescue, emergency communications and corrections. The VACP appreciates the support and hard work of the State Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) and Statewide Strategic Plan for Interoperable Communications on this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Chief Charles W. Bennett, Jr.

President